

# A HIGH PRECISION TRIANGULAR LAMINATED ANISOTROPIC CYLINDRICAL SHELL FINITE ELEMENT

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**Abstract**—The stiffness matrix for a high precision triangular laminated anisotropic cylindrical shell finite element has been formulated and coded into a composite structural analysis program. The versatility of the element's formulation enables its use in the analysis of multilayered composite plate and cylindrical shell type structures taking into account actual lamination parameters. The example applications presented demonstrated that accurate predictions of stresses as well as displacements are obtained with modest number of elements.

## INTRODUCTION

Multilayered composite materials are increasingly used in the construction of plate and shell type structures for various industrial and aero-space applications, creating a parallel need for structural analysis procedures which reflect the laminated anisotropic characteristics of such materials. Although the basic equations which govern the elastic behaviour of laminated anisotropic plate and shell structures can be derived [1], analytical solutions of these complex equations, as they pertain to design and analysis, are not available. The analysis of composite structures is an area which calls for an extensive use of digital computers and numerical methods like the finite element method.

The finite element method has proved to be an extremely powerful tool for the solution of problems involving complex geometries, arbitrary loadings and rather general material properties. Considerable advances have been made in the development and application of the finite element method to plate and shell type structures. Much of the work is reviewed by Gallagher [2, 3]. According to these reviews, the analysis of thin shells is one of the more difficult problems that has been attempted with the finite element method. The requirements upon valid minimum potential energy solutions in thin shell finite element analysis are extremely difficult to satisfy, and the satisfactory formulations are therefore relatively complicated. Further, for tackling problems involving description of arbitrary boundaries triangular and quadrilateral elements are obviously best suited. The most reliable and sophisticated triangular shell element formulations are those due to Dupuis [4], Cowper *et al.* [5], Argyris and Scharph [6] and Dawe [7]. The formulation due to Cowper *et al.* [5] has also been converted into a triangular cylindrical shell finite element by Lindberg and Olson [8]. The salient features of this element are: (i) The element is fully conforming, of the displacement type and of arbitrary triangular shape, (ii) Uses higher order interpolation polynomials and has 36 degrees of freedom, (iii) Transverse displacement function contains a complete quartic polynomial plus some higher degree terms and allows cubic variation of normal slope along each edge, (iv) Tangential displacement functions are complete cubic polynomials to yield a quadratic variation of stresses within the element, (v) Gives accurate predictions of displacements as well as stresses, (vi) Satisfies sufficient conditions to guarantee rapid convergence, (vii) Permits reliable and direct

evaluation of stresses at nodes, (viii) The element stiffness matrix is formulated in exact closed form, (ix) Results in a smaller overall problem size and (x) The versatility of the formulation enables its use in the analysis of flat plates in either membrane or flexural behaviour and for the coupled membrane-flexural behaviour of cylindrical shells. The formulations of this element as given in Ref. [8] is confined to homogeneous isotropic materials. The present work is concerned with the generalization of this formulation to take into account the laminated anisotropic characteristics of multilayered composite materials.

The purpose of this paper is to present the formulation and some useful applications of a high precision triangular laminated anisotropic cylindrical shell finite element. In order to perform composite structural analysis, a computer program incorporating this element has been developed. Distinct membrane and flexural stiffnesses are retained permitting analysis of composite structures subjected to inplane and bending loads. The applications presented encompassing fiat plates in plane stress and in flexure and circular cylindrical shells clearly indicate the usefulness of the element in composite structural analysis.

## FORMULATION

The geometry of an arbitrary triangular cylindrical shell element is shown in Fig. 1. The global cylindrical coordinate system is  $X, Y$  and  $\xi, \eta$  are taken as local coordinates for the element.  $R$  is the radius of curvature of the reference surface of the shell and  $t$  is its wall thickness. The dimensions  $a, b, c$  of the triangle 1, 2, 3 and the rotation angle  $\phi$  are easily derived in terms of the global coordinates of the vertices [9].

The strain energy of a thin cylindrical shell in global coordinates is given by

$$U = \frac{1}{2} \iint \{ [N]^T \{ \epsilon \} + [M]^T \{ \chi \} \} dx dy \quad (1)$$

where

$[N]^T = (N_x, N_y, N_{xy})$  are the membrane forces  
 $[M]^T = (M_x, M_y, M_{xy})$  are the bending stress resultants  
 $\{ \epsilon \}^T = (\epsilon_x, \epsilon_y, \gamma_{xy})$  are the reference surface strains and  
 $\{ \chi \}^T = (\chi_x, \chi_y, \chi_{xy})$  are the bending curvatures.

For an arbitrarily laminated anisotropic shell, the con-



CC	-SC	-SC	SS	0	0	0	0
SC	CC	-SS	-SC	0	0	0	0
SC	-SS	CC	-SC	0	0	0	0
SS	SC	SC	CC	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
					CC	-2SC	SS
					SC	CC - SS	-SC
					SS	2SC	CC

$$SC = \sin \theta \cos \theta$$

Fig. 3. 5 x 5 Finate element grid.

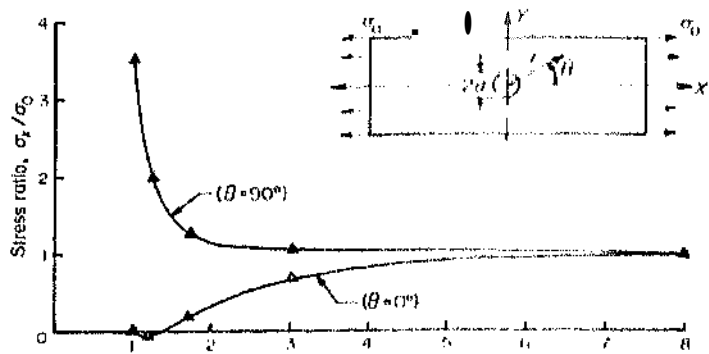


Fig. 4. Axial stress distribution along X and Y axes. —, Analytical solution;  $\Delta$ , finite element results.

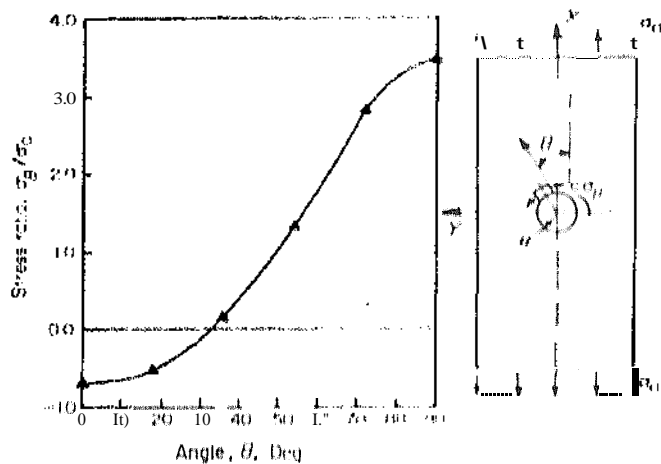


Fig. 5. Tangential stress distribution along hole boundary. —, Analytical solution;  $\Delta$ , finite element results.

the quarter panel. The predictions are also given in Table 3 for comparison. The fact that the present formulation yields better accuracy with about one-third the problem size demonstrate the superiority of the element.

The problem has also been analysed experimentally using straingages, photoelastic coatings and moire techniques in Ref. [12]. Average predictions are given in Table 3. The close agreement between the present results and experimental data readily verifies the adequacy of the assumed laminated anisotropic model in the analysis as a first approximation to the actual multilayered composite material behaviour.

*Clamped glass-epoxy composite square plate subjected to uniform pressure load.* Figure 6 shows a glass-epoxy composite square plate with clamped edges subjected to uniform pressure load. Symmetry allows the analysis to be limited to one quarter of the plate. Arrangement of

the elements in a quadrant of the plate are shown in Fig. 6. Predicted deflection distributions along the centrelines of the plate are shown in Fig. 7 and compared with results from an approximate analytical solution given in Ref. [13]. This analytical solution assumes identical deflection profiles along the centrelines. Whereas, as it should be, the present analysis predicts different deflection profiles parallel and perpendicular to the fibre direction. This prediction is in agreement with experimental observations on unidirectional composite plates in flexure using techniques [14]. Bending moment distributions along the centrelines of the plate shown in Fig. 8 are also plotted and can be considered to have converged with the analytical results given in Table 4 can be considered more accurate than the solution available in [13].

to show a long centreline with the on given is identical the plate predicts is perpendicular to qualitative in unidirectional holographic s along the ily smooth well. Typefered more however, an ed stresses

Table 3. Boron-epoxy laminate with a circular hole under axial tension. Comparison of results

	No. of unknowns	Stress concentration factors at		Strain concentration factors at	
		$\theta = 0^\circ$	$\theta = 90^\circ$	$\theta = 0^\circ$	$\theta = 90^\circ$
Present results	186	0.6957	3.4982	1.4725	3.449
Analytical solution, Ref. [12]	—	0.6829	3.45	1.46	3.45
Finite element results, Ref [9]	598	—	3.60	1.58	3.60
Experimental results, Ref. [9]	—	—	3.34	1.5	3.34

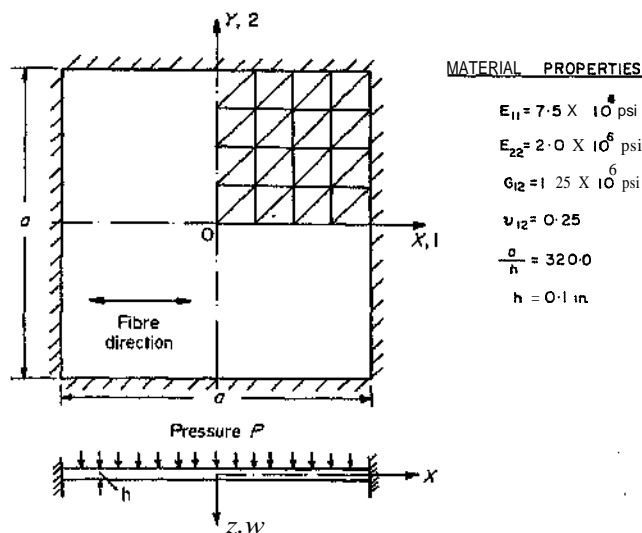


Fig. 6. Finite element grid for clamped glass-epoxy composite square plate.

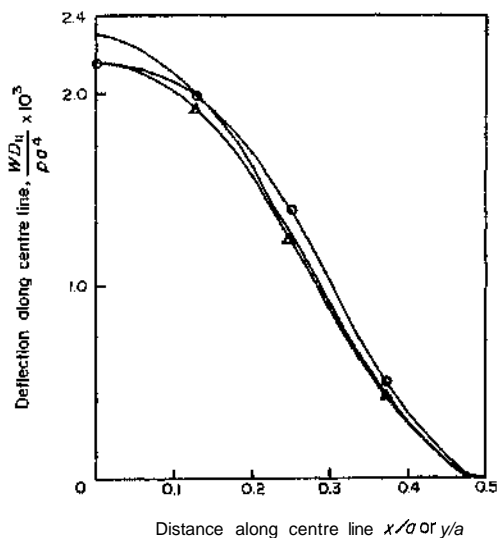


Fig. 7. Deflections of clamped glass-epoxy composite square plate. —, Analytical solutions; A, along X-axis; 0, along Y-axis.

and deflections is not possible due to inherent approximations in the available solution in Ref. [13]. (The solution in [13] when specialized to isotropic case shows an error of about 6.3% for maximum deflection and unacceptable accuracy for maximum moments.)

An *orthotropic cylindrical shell with a circular hole* subjected to axial tension. The problem illustrated in Fig. 9 is analysed to evaluate the coupled membrane-bending behaviour of the cylindrical shell form of the element. Taking advantage of symmetry, only one quarter of the shell needs to be analysed. Choosing the  $5 \times 5$  finite element grid illustrated in Fig. 3, 51 elements with 37 nodes (367 degrees of freedom) are used to model the quarter of the shell. The adequacy of the chosen grid to solve the present problem was checked by solving an otherwise identical isotropic shell problem. Typical results are given in Table 5 along with continuum solutions [15] for comparison to demonstrate the accuracy achieved with the rather coarse mesh used.

Predicted stress distributions for both isotropic and orthotropic shells are shown in Figs. 10 and 11 along With

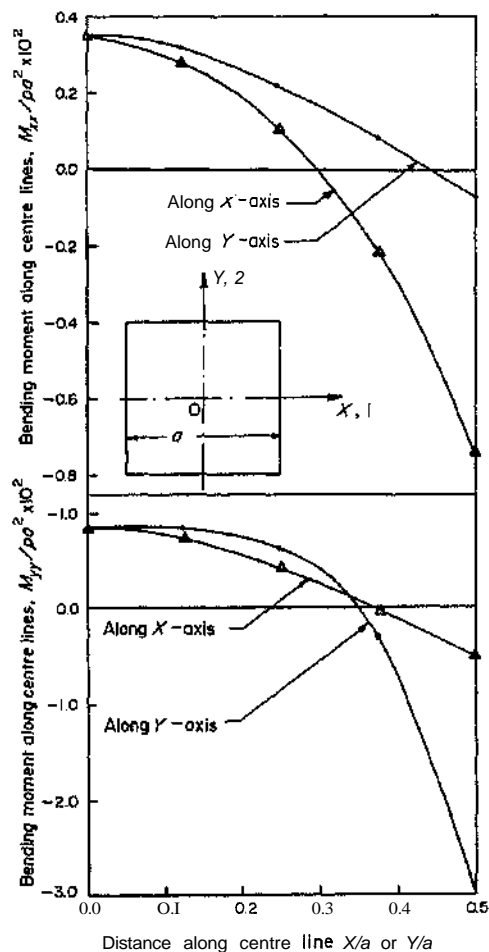


Fig. 8. Moment distributions along centre lines of clamped glass-epoxy composite square plate.

the results of anisotropic elasticity solution to the problem of an infinite plate with a circular hole [11]. The predicted stress distributions are fairly smooth and appear to have converged as well. Near the hole the coupled membrane-bending behaviour appears to be

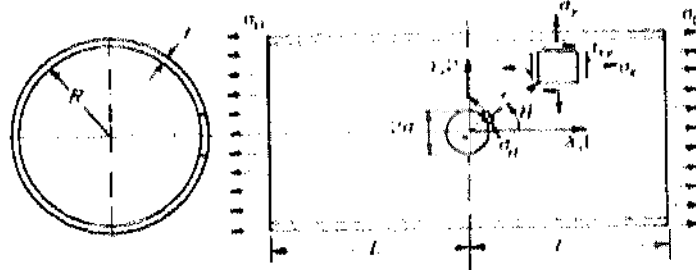
Table 4. Clamped glass-epoxy composite square plate subjected to uniform pressure load—comparison of results

	Maximum deflection $WD_{11}/pa^4$	Bending moments at $X = a/2, Y = 0$ $M_{xx}/pa^2$ $M_{yy}/pa^2$		Bending moments at $X = 0, Y = a/2$ $M_{xx}/pa^2$ $M_{yy}/pa^2$	
Present results	0.00216	0.0744	0.00495	0.00732	0.02938
Approximate analytical solution Ref. [10]	0.002313	0.06517	0.004333	0.00433	-0.01732

Table 5. Cylindrical shell with a circular hole under axial tension—Comparison of results

	Membrane stress ratio ( $\sigma_{\theta}^m/\sigma_0$ )		Bending stress <sup>†</sup> ratio ( $\sigma_{\theta}^b/\sigma_0$ )	
	at $\theta = 10^\circ$	at $\theta = 90^\circ$	at $\theta = 0$	at $\theta = 90^\circ$
Orthotropic shell				
Present results	0.503648	4.9389	0.301823	0.4391
Orthotropic plate				
Solution Ref. [12]	0.4813	4.8963	0.0	0.0
Isotropic shell				
Present results	1.26018	3.70422	0.67525	0.5203
Isotropic shell				
results from Ref. [11]	1.25	3.6	0.80	0.45

†At inner surface of the shell



GEOMETRIC PARAMETERS		MATERIAL CONSTANTS	
		ISOTROPIC (Aluminum)	ORTHOTROPIC (Glass-Epoxy Composite)
$\frac{R}{t} = 100$	$E_x$	$10 \times 10^6$ psi	$1.5 \times 10^6$ psi
$\frac{a}{t} = 10$	$E_{\theta\theta}$	$10 \times 10^6$ psi	$1.5 \times 10^6$ psi
$L = 5$	$\alpha_{xx}$	$6.64 \times 10^{-6}$ in/in/in	$1.5 \times 10^{-6}$ in/in/in
$\nu = 0.33$	$\nu_{12}$	0.33	0.27
	$\nu_{21}$	0.33	0.1825

Fig. 9. Cylindrical shell with a circular hole under axial tension.

characterized adequately by the small number of elements used. Predicted membrane and bending stress concentration factors are presented in Table 1. The main difficulty in assessing accuracy of these results arises from the fact that authors could not find any other result for the orthotropic shell for comparison. Since the isotropic shell is a particular case of the orthotropic shell treated here it might be expected that the same order of accuracy holds good for both.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The stiffness matrix for a high precision triangular

been formulated, and coded into a analysis program. The versatility of mulation enables its use in the analy composite plate and cylindrical shell into account actual lamination par obtained with the use of the sub] demonstrated good engineering accu well as displacements in the example modest number of elements.

The ultimate objective of any ana tool. This work implies the iterative procedures in a design exercise. The ment formulation is ideally suited 1

posite structural e element's for ; of multilayered structures taking ters. The results it finite element ey for stress as applications with a

sis is as a design ie of the analysis present finite el computer-aided

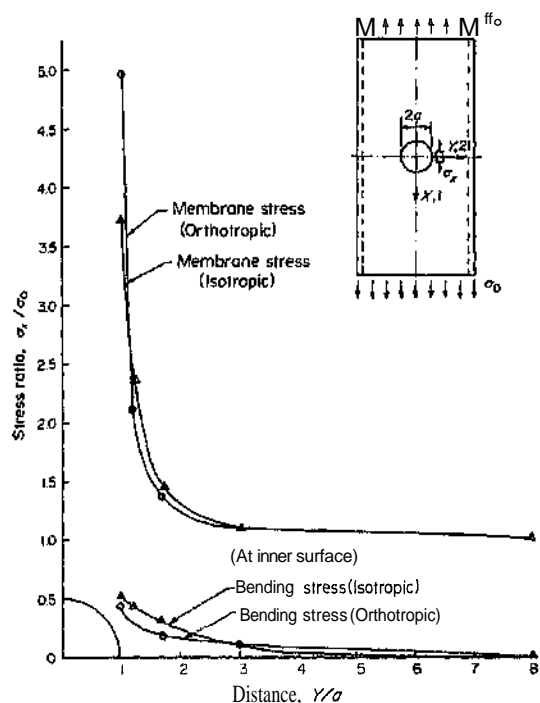


Fig. 10. Axial stress distribution along Y-axis.

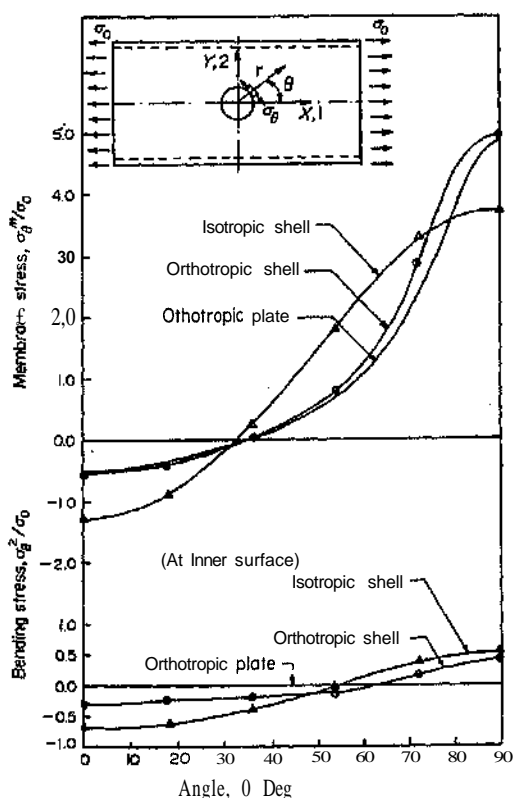


Fig. 11. Tangential stress distribution along the hole boundary.

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## APPENDIX

Stiffness Matrix  $[k]$ 

$$\begin{aligned}
 k_{ij} &= \tilde{L}_{11} m_i m_j F(m_i + m_j - 2, n_i + n_j) \\
 j \geq i &+ \tilde{L}_{12} (m_i n_j + m_j n_i) F(m_i + m_j - 1, n_i + n_j - 1) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{13} m_i p_j F(m_i + p_j - 2, n_i + q_j) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{14} m_i q_j F(m_i + p_j - 1, n_i + q_j - 1) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{15} m_i F(m_i + r_i - 1, n_i + s_i) G_i \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{16} m_i r_j (r_j - 1) F(m_i + r_j - 3, n_i + s_j) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{17} m_i r_j s_j F(m_i + r_j - 2, n_i + s_j - 1) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{18} m_i s_j (s_j - 1) F(m_i + r_j - 1, n_i + s_j - 2) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{22} n_i n_j F(m_i + m_j, n_i + n_j - 2) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{23} n_i p_j F(m_i + p_j - 1, n_i + q_j - 1) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{24} n_i q_j F(m_i + p_j, n_i + q_j - 2) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{25} n_i F(m_i + r_i, n_i + s_i - 1) G_i \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{26} n_i r_j (r_j - 1) F(m_i + r_j - 2, n_i + s_j - 1) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{27} n_i r_j s_j F(m_i + r_j - 1, n_i + s_j - 2) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{28} n_i s_j (s_j - 1) F(m_i + r_i, n_i + s_j - 3) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{33} p_i p_j F(p_i + p_j - 2, q_i + q_j) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{34} (p_i q_j + p_j q_i) F(p_i + p_j - 1, q_i + q_j - 1) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{35} p_i F(p_i + r_i - 1, q_i + s_i) G_j \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{36} p_i r_j (r_j - 1) F(p_i + r_j - 3, q_i + s_j) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{37} p_i r_j s_j F(p_i + r_j - 2, q_i + s_j - 1) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{38} p_i s_j (s_j - 1) F(p_i + r_i, q_i + s_j - 2) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{44} q_i q_j F(p_i + p_j, q_i + q_j - 2) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{45} q_i F(p_i + r_i, q_i + s_i - 1) G_i \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{46} q_i r_j (r_j - 1) F(p_i + r_j - 2, q_i + s_j - 1) \\
 &+ \tilde{L}_{47} q_i r_j s_j F(p_i + r_j - 1, q_i + s_j - 2)
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& + \tilde{L}_{448} q_i s_j s_{j-1} F(p_i + r_i, q_i + s_i - 3) \\
& + \tilde{L}_{455} F(r_i + r_j, s_i + s_j) G_i G_j \\
& + \tilde{L}_{466} r_j (r_j - 1) F(r_i + r_j - 2, s_i + s_j) G_i \\
& + \tilde{L}_{477} r_j s_j [r_i(r_i + r_j - 4, s_i + s_j - 1) G_i \\
& + \tilde{L}_{488} s_j (s_j - 1) F(r_i + r_j, s_i + s_j - 2) G_j \\
& + \tilde{L}_{666} r_i r_j (r_i - 1)(r_j - 1) F(r_i + r_j - 4, s_i + s_j) \\
& + \tilde{L}_{677} r_i r_j (r_i - 1) s_j F(r_i + r_j - 3, s_i + s_j - 1) \\
& + \tilde{L}_{688} (r_i s_j (r_i - 1)(s_j - 1) + r_j s_i (r_j - 1)(s_i - 1)) \\
& \times F(r_i + r_j - 2, s_i + s_j - 2) \\
& + \tilde{L}_{777} r_i r_j s_i s_j F(r_i + r_j - 2, s_i + s_j - 2) \\
& + \tilde{L}_{788} r_i s_j s_i (s_j - 1) F(r_i + r_j - 1, s_i + s_j - 3)
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& + \tilde{L}_{888} s_i s_j (s_i - 1)(s_j - 1) F(r_i + r_j, s_i + s_j - 4) \\
& k_n
\end{aligned}$$

where

$$f(m, n) = (-1)^{m+n} \{a^{m+1} + (-1)^{m+1} \dots \frac{(n!)}{(m+n+2)!}$$

$$m_i, n_i = 0 \quad \text{for } i = 10$$

$$p_i, q_i = 0 \quad \text{for } 11 \leq i \leq 20$$

$$r_i, s_i = 0 \quad \text{for } i = 21$$

$$G_i = 0 \quad \text{for } i = 21,$$

$$G_i = 1 \quad \text{for } i = 22.$$